

**SACRAMENTO RIVER-SAN JOAQUIN RIVER DELTA
ABANDONED VESSEL/WATER HAZARD ISSUE
APRIL 14, 2010**

The Problem

- The Delta is a nationally important estuary with more than 500,000 residents, is a major state tourist attraction and recreational area, and is California's single-most important source and transmission system for drinking and irrigation water.
- Numerous abandoned and derelict vessels and related abandoned boating structures are a pervasive environmental and public safety problem in coastal and inland waterways of California and are a substantial problem in the delta. Encountered wastes include fuel and oil spills, household hazardous wastes, solid wastes, asbestos, PCBs, lead based paint, and marine batteries.
- The Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff Marine Services Unit has removed over 350 abandoned recreational vessels from within their jurisdiction utilizing the Department of Boating and Waterways' Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Program however other local jurisdictions are just now moving in a similar fashion.
- The Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Program does not address abandoned commercial vessels except in cases where they present navigational hazards or are an imminent threat to the watercourse resulting from the discharge of hazardous pollutants.

The Solution

- The Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff Marine Services Unit identified 12 abandoned commercial vessels and three water hazard sites (i.e., derelict dock and equipment structures) within its jurisdiction on the Delta and requested cleanup assistance from CalRecycle and the State Water Resources Control Board to remove this solid waste from the State's waterways and lands.
- CalRecycle managed the \$350,000 project and utilized its cleanup contractor to carry out the work with Contra Costa County completing ownership adjudication of the vessels and facilities to allow CalRecycle to legally remove the vessels.

The Status

- As of April 15, 2010, approximately half of the sites had been cleaned up with 24 truckloads (i.e., 240 to 280 tons) of solid waste and other materials along with Over 5,000 waste tires removed for proper disposal and/or recycling.
- Other materials encountered included asbestos, lead-based paint, and engine fuel and lubricants.
- Project Completion anticipated during May 2010.

The Future

- Marine Patrol and Code Enforcement staff from Sacramento, Yolo, and San Joaquin Counties indicate each jurisdiction's delta waterways is "home" to additional abandoned commercial vessels and facilities in the Delta.
- An Agency lead, coordinated task force of key State and Federal agencies needs to be assembled so that funding and expertise can come together to address this problem first in the delta and then in other critical waterways of the State.